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The American Legion

For God and Country

Vol. 148, No. 5

The Magazine for a Strong America

MAY 2000

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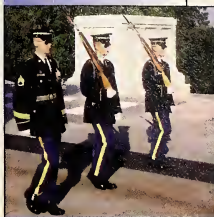
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Photo illustration by Holly K. Soria.

THE AMERICAN LEGION MAGAZINE, a leader among national general-interest publications, is published monthly by The American Legion for its 2.7 million members. These wartime veterans, working through nearly 15,000 community-level Posts, dedicate themselves to God and Country and traditional American values; strong national security; adequate and compassionate care for veterans, their widows and orphans; community service; and the wholesome development of our nation's youths.



12



16



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The American Legion Magazine

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Indianapolis, IN 46207

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Los Angeles: 310-841-0280

Detroit: 248-543-0068

Atlanta: 404-252-0968

San Francisco: 415-989-5804

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Copyright 2000 by The American Legion

The American Legion (ISSN 0886-1234) is published monthly by The American Legion, 5561 W. 74th Street, Indianapolis, IN 46268. Periodicals postage paid at Indianapolis, IN 46204 and additional mailing offices. Annual non-member and gift subscriptions, \$15 (\$21, foreign); Post-sponsored and widows' subscriptions, \$6; single copy, \$3.50. Member annual subscription price \$3.00, which is included in annual member dues. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The American Legion, Input Services, P.O. Box 1954, Indianapolis, IN 46206. Internet address: <http://www.legion.org>.

Change of Address: Notify The American Legion, Input Services, P.O. Box 1954, Indianapolis, IN 46206. (317) 860-3111. Attach old address label, provide old and new addresses and current membership card number.

Canada Post International Publications Mail (Canadian Distribution) Sales Agreement No. 546321. Re-entered second-class mail matter at Manila Central Post office dated Dec. 22, 1991.



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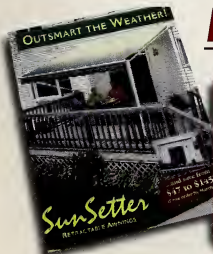
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An Eye-Opener on China

Thank you for publishing Frank Gaffney's article on China ("Are the United States and China on a Collision Course?" March). Maybe in November we can get an administration that will stop kowtowing to the Chinese regime communists.

— William A. Robinson
Seligman, Ariz.

Cleland Captured Motto

The March issue captured our motto "For God and Country." Sen. Max Cleland's article ("Going for the Max") and the sad but heroic story of Ron Robertson ("Heroic Legionnaire Dies Subduing Gunman") touched my heart.

— David Bolea Jr., Sanborn, N.Y.



Courtesy: Max Cleland

No Political Chess Game

Sen. John Kerry's lack of a response to "Are U.S. Military Forces overcommitted?" ("Big Issues," March) didn't even begin to answer the question. His response shows just how out of touch he, the Democratic Party and some Republicans are when it comes to overcommitting the U.S. military.

It's time we take the money used on these deployments to rebuild our severely depleted and broken equipment, and provide better pay and housing for our men and women in uniform. Kerry's right that the military deserves better pay, but that will not keep soldiers in uniform nor will it attract future enlistees. The U.S. military will continue to dwindle in numbers as long as we play the role of a world police force.

Perhaps the way to attract and retain quality service members is to pay and equip them well and develop a real national security strategy instead of some lame political game of human chess.

— Jim Grove, Baltimore

More Gun-Control Spin

Anyone who watched President Clinton's State of the Union speech should

have noticed a new spin on the gun-control debate. He used his national forum to help those who want incremental disarmament of private citizens, which is in violation of the Second Amendment.

Anti-gun forces realized salesmanship is more effective using "positive" terms. The results were seen in the president's use of gun safety laws outlined in the speech. How could anyone oppose safety regulations? Opponents would be branded as extremists encouraging careless use of weapons. We can look for this kind of attack in the upcoming elections.

We will no doubt be encouraged to disarm ourselves for our own safety. Isn't language a wonderful thing?

— Paul Mammano, Apple Valley, Calif.

Europe Should Grow Up

Regarding "No Break in Sight for Troops in Balkans," in February, it is sad to see that the United States is becoming involved in Europe's problems yet again. After bailing the Europeans out of World Wars I and II; after feeding them between and after the wars, rebuilding their countries, giving them foreign aid for the last century and protecting them from the Soviet Union for the last half century, we are once again



AP Photo

WE WANT YOUR OPINIONS

The American Legion Magazine welcomes letters concerning articles that appear in the publication. Letter writers are also encouraged to submit photographs of themselves for possible publication with their letters. Be sure to include your hometown and a daytime phone number for verification. All letters are subject to editing. Send your opinions to:

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trying to save them from themselves.

I totally disagree with placing our troops again in a place that has never given us aid or assistance when we needed it. It's time for Europe to grow up and evolve, and not at the expense of our proud service members.

— George Kalishevich, Coaldale, Pa.

Uphold Our Rights

Some of the presidential candidates have a severe conflict regarding what they are saying now and the oath to uphold and protect the Constitution.

"The right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed," is still part of the Constitution. Arguing that it is archaic is irrelevant. "The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures," is another part of the Constitution that has not been protected.

Voters need to realize that these politicians must lie under presidential oath in order to enforce proposed gun legislation and current drug search and seizure policies. Let's elect people who will strictly enforce the Constitution, not strip us of the rights that it guarantees.

— Randolph Beeman, Front Royal, Va.

Real Life Hero Ron

Once again, I hold my head high and thank God I am a citizen of the greatest nation ever known to man. I just finished reading Layne Cameron's article on an authentic American hero ("Heroic Legionnaire Dies Subduing Gunman," March).

Ron placed his life in harm's way only to come home and be executed by

one of those whose freedom he fought to preserve. Some might say they can't believe there are still people like Ron Robertson. I tell them there are many.



Courtesy: Barbara Robertson

Many heroes do heroic things every day that go unnoticed and unthanked. No one group knows this better than the Legionnaires. I'm proud to be an American and I'm very proud to be a Legionnaire.

— Joe Doyen, Hammondsport, N.Y.



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Article Struck a Chord

The December article "Music for the Years" brought back a lot of memories for this old man. In the late 1930s and 1940s, I was a member of the Pennsylvania State College American Legion Drum and Bugle Corps and still remember what a great outfit it was.

We were state champions for four years and national champs in 1939. For those who worked so hard to make us the best, I say, "Thank you." For those in the corps today, I say, "Go for it." It sure is worth it.

—Melvin Neff, Seven Valleys, Pa.



Allow Vouchers

The GI Bill, now over a half-century old, should refute all the unjust, illogical decisions handed down by courts challenging school voucher programs. The GI Bill allows federal money for veterans to be used in the colleges of their choice, regardless of their religious status.

There is no basis for jurisprudence attempting to thwart the use of tax money for school vouchers to pay for private schools.

—Marvin Doudna
West Palm Beach, Fla.

Return to Core Values

So this is the last of eight years of the most "ethical" administration we have ever known? The America we live in today is not the America I remember.

Handshakes used to be as good as a contract, respect was shown to everyone and there was no question as to the definition of words. This country used to be full of Americans, not hyphenated derivatives spawned by the media or interest group bureaucrats.

Neighbors would help each other out of the goodness of their hearts and the courts weren't inundated by frivolous lawsuits from people refusing to accept responsibility for their own actions. We used to get the news as it actually happened, not reported out of context and distorted.

If the era of big government is over, why is it still one of the largest employers in the nation? Will we ever get back to that great country so many fought and died for?

—Herbert Shimke, Onekama, Mich.

Muhammad Ali is No Hero

I am appalled at a recent bill introduced by Sen. Jim Bunning of Kentucky authorizing the Congressional Gold Medal for Muhammad Ali. How soon some have forgotten that Ali refused to serve during the Vietnam War.

He cited religious convictions against military service despite provisions that afford conscientious objectors non-combatant status.

To award him a congressional medal would be a shameful act and a slap in the face of every person who ever wore a uniform.

—L. James Binder, Woodbridge, Va.

Hold Officials Accountable

Ours is a government "of the people, by the people, and for the people."

Americans have spoken and many are in favor of a flag-protection amendment.

When representatives do not vote the preference of the people, remember it at election time. To those in Congress who do not vote the will of their constituents, be ready to clean out your desks! The American people demand that the flag be protected.

—Tod B. Jennings, Reno, Nev.



The Gift of Speed

I enjoyed reading "School for Fast Learners," in March. I took the Richard Petty Driving Experience at the Texas International



Speedway two years ago. My family gave it to me as a birthday present.

At 60, I was the oldest in my group, but that didn't slow me down! It was an exciting experience I

would recommend to anyone.

—Ron Curtis, Dayton, Ohio

Congressman at Work

I urge all in the veterans community to reach out to their elected officials. You might just be surprised at the response you get.

Recently, I contacted my congressman, Steny Hoyer, D-Md. I asked him to create a veterans advisory committee to relay our concerns directly to him and get swift results.

He enthusiastically agreed and set up a committee of five veterans from every county and 10 statewide leaders. We plan to meet three or four times each year.

This way we veterans know that the issues of concern to us are always on the congressman's radar screen. Because Hoyer is a straight shooter, we in turn will always know precisely where we stand in Congress on these and other important issues.

Granted, the residents in our district are very fortunate to have a congressman who honors the sacred pact this country has made with the men and women who put their lives on the line to protect it. However, it is incumbent on us — the veterans community — to prevail upon our legislators to continue to recognize our sacrifices.

Too often our voices are drowned out and our concerns are lost in the shuffle. As my experience with Congressman Hoyer shows, it does not have to be that way. Let's all help each other harness the energy of the veterans community and pull together behind elected officials like Hoyer to make our country a better, safer place to live.

—PNC Clarence Bacon
Bethesda, Md.



PNC Clarence Bacon

Correction

In the March Veterans Update, the article titled "New law provides funeral honors for veterans" should have stated that as of Jan. 1, the Department of Defense is required to provide two service members — active duty, reserve or National Guard — at veterans' funerals. We apologize for the error.

Message to China: "Stay out of Taiwan"

THE COLD WAR IS OVER, but democracy is not safe. The People's Republic of China proved that when it upped the ante in its attempt to take control of Taiwan. The communist government issued a blunt warning that reinforces its scheme for reclaiming the nearby island nation. There is no doubt China wants the reunification to happen as soon as possible, and the communists want it on their own terms. Of course, China has dictated terms that no independent nation could accept.

The communist leadership said it would "spare no effort in a blood-soaked battle" to protect China's "territorial integrity" if Taiwan does not pursue a peaceful settlement through negotiations. Chinese President Jiang Zemin reaffirmed China's stance, pushing its preference for negotiations, but also threatening "drastic measures" if Taiwan delays indefinitely.

The United States cannot allow such bullying to occur. We need to send a strong message to the communist nation – "Stay out of Taiwan!"

The American Legion, which has supported Taiwan since that republic's founding, fully supports the Taiwan

Relations Act of 1979. This act calls for the United States to "provide Taiwan with arms of a defensive character; and to maintain the capacity of the United States to resist any resort to force or other forms of coercion that would jeopardize the security, or the social or economic system, of the people of Taiwan."

Now that Hong Kong and Macau are under mainland control, many observers note a growing impatience with Taiwan's independence. Communist China can also now focus all of its "One-China" policy on reclaiming the Republic of China.

With its current military capacity, China appears to be incapable of the task. Yet make no mistake, the communist nation is building a force capable of completing its mission. With China's recent purchase of Russian destroyers with anti-ship missiles, it is readying itself for an offensive strike.

Recognizing this long-term agenda, the House passed the Taiwan Security Enhancement Act by a wide margin in February. The proposed legislation, which awaits a vote in the Senate, provides more training for the Taiwanese military, as well as a direct communication link between the United States and Taiwanese armed forces.



National Commander Al Lance

It is no surprise that China vehemently opposes such support. The communist nation lobbied hard against the act, claiming "this legislation will push Taiwan closer to war." (Foreign nations lobbying our legislators – what's wrong with this picture?)

Use of such language simply illustrates the fact that China has never masked its agenda of subduing Taiwan. That is why the United States cannot send mixed, distorted or conflicting signals. Since The American Legion considers Taiwan to be a strong U.S. ally and an important partner in regional security in Asia, we believe the United States should continue to support Taiwan's national defense. We clarified our stance during the Anaheim National Convention with Resolution No. 3, which states: "We support and encourage the continued sales of sophisticated American weapons systems to the Republic of China, so that it can maintain a sufficient self-defense capability."

In all probability, The American Legion would support any responsible retaliation by the United States against an attack by China on the territorial integrity of Taiwan. Let us demonstrate our resolve to defend a valued and valuable ally and let Communist China know its preparations for a takeover by force will not be sanctioned. China should come to its senses before bullets and missiles take the place of diplomacy, negotiation and statesmanship.

Taiwan: China's "outlawed" outpost of freedom





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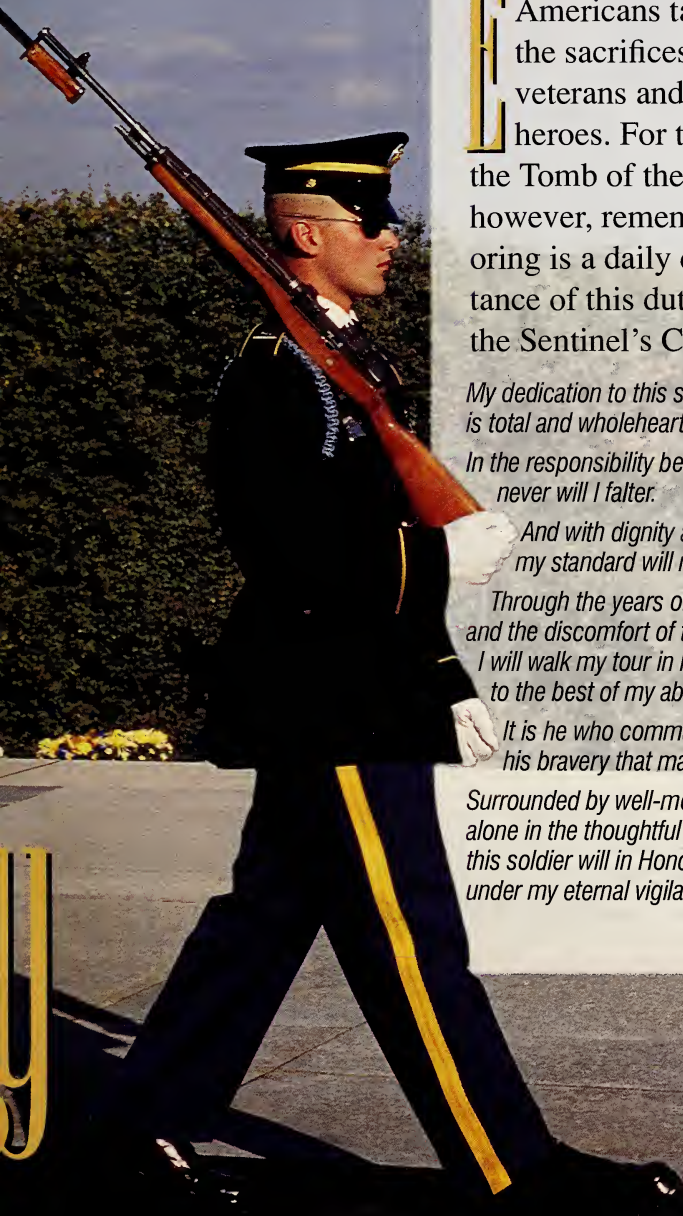
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POW-ALM 500



In Honored Glory



EACH MEMORIAL DAY, we Americans take time to recall the sacrifices made by our veterans and honor them as heroes. For those who guard the Tomb of the Unknowns, however, remembering and honoring is a daily duty. The importance of this duty is expressed in the Sentinel's Creed:

*My dedication to this sacred duty
is total and wholehearted.*

*In the responsibility bestowed on me,
never will I falter.*

*And with dignity and perseverance,
my standard will remain perfection.*

*Through the years of diligence and praise,
and the discomfort of the elements,
I will walk my tour in humble reverence
to the best of my ability.*

*It is he who commands the respect I protect,
his bravery that made us so proud.*

*Surrounded by well-meaning crowds by day,
alone in the thoughtful peace of night,
this soldier will in Honored Glory rest
under my eternal vigilance.*

*— Sentinel's Creed of the Guard of the
Tomb of the Unknown Soldier*



Sen. Strom Thurmond, President Pro Tempore of the Senate, answers questions during his interview with *The American Legion Magazine*.

STROM THURMOND: Sounding the Alarm on Security, Readiness

STROM THURMOND was born during the Roosevelt administration – the Theodore Roosevelt administration, that is. Elected to the U.S. Senate in 1954, he is its longest-serving member and will be 100 when he leaves office in 2002.

A physical fitness buff since his days on the Clemson College track squad, the South Carolina Republican attributes his

longevity to a daily fitness routine and eating right. “No sugar, no fat, and cut down the red meat if you can,” he says.

Thurmond has served the people of the Palmetto State and the United States for 76 years. Commissioned as an Army second lieutenant in 1924, he was promoted to major general in 1959. Before being elected to the Senate, Thurmond served as a state senator, circuit judge and

as governor of South Carolina.

His World War II service began the day America declared war against Germany. Thurmond took off his robes as a South Carolina circuit judge and volunteered for active duty – even though judges were exempt from military service.

Following his WWII service, The American Legion was the first veterans’ organization Thurmond chose to join.

His Senate office is adorned with photographs and mementos reflecting his Senate career, military service and strong national defense record. Several facilities have been named for the senator, including the Strom Thurmond Soldier Service Center at Fort Jackson, S.C. He has been awarded some 34 honorary degrees.

Washington Watch columnist Cliff Kincaid interviewed Sen. Thurmond for *The American Legion Magazine*.

THE AMERICAN LEGION MAGAZINE: In the Senate, you gained a reputation as an authority on military issues and an advocate of a strong national defense. Are you satisfied with the condition of our military today?

SEN. THURMOND: We have a fine military. But it has become weakened by years of inadequate funding. It is essential that we strengthen our military by improving our armed forces’ quality of life and readiness, and updating equipment. During the past several years we have jeopardized our national security by dramatically increasing deployments while continuing to shrink the size of our armed forces.

Q: Are U.S. troops being overdeployed on these peacekeeping missions?

A: American troops are current-

■ **1942-45:** WW II service.

■ **1942-43:** Assigned to various stateside postings, Thurmond shipped out for Europe at the end of 1943.

■ **1945:** Transferred to the Pacific Theater to help prepare for the planned invasion of Japan.

Nearly a
century
of service

1900

■ **1902:** Born in Edgefield, S.C.

■ **1923:** Graduated from Clemson College with a B.S. in horticulture.

■ **1929-33:** Served as superintendent of education, Edgefield County.

■ **1933-38:** Elected to South Carolina State Senate.

■ **1924:** Commissioned as a second lieutenant, U.S. Army Reserve.

■ **1930-38:** Admitted to the South Carolina Bar; served as city and county attorney in Edgefield.

■ **1938-46:** Elected as a South Carolina circuit judge (took four-year leave of absence during World War II).

WW

ly deployed on missions that may not be in the United States' interest. We are now involved in several civil wars in failed nation-states without clear solutions. I commend our deployed forces but remain concerned where this may lead the United States.

In the last few years we have sent troops to Somalia, Indonesia, Bosnia, Kosovo, Macedonia and Albania, to name a few. The administration is currently considering sending troops to southern Africa. In fact, we have embarked on a dangerous course that has the potential to squander our military power, leaving the United States susceptible to foreign aggressors. Stemming civil wars should not be the main strategic challenge for the United States.

Q: How serious should recent Chinese threats against Taiwan be taken?

A: This matter should be taken very seriously, given the recent statements made by the People's Republic of China. I endorse the one-China principle, but the current situation needs to be resolved peacefully. Any hostile action by either side is unacceptable.

Q: The 50th anniversary of the start of the Korean War is coming up. Was the armistice the best solution, and has it led to Korea being the "Forgotten War"?

A: I think because of the circumstances at the time, the armistice was the best solution. The Korean War should not be considered the forgotten war. In fact, the

conflict account, and any references to this entity, should be redesignated as the Department of Defense Korean War Commemoration Account to ensure that it is given its due respect.

Q: What is your opinion of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell"? Do homosexuals belong in the military?

A: It's not a matter of whether I feel they should or should not be in the military. The policy that was decided when I was chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee was "Don't ask, don't tell."

Q: Do you favor mixed-gender basic training or the Marine Corps approach of separate training?

A: As chairman of the Armed Services Committee, I put together a commission on gender-integrated training and related issues. It was decided that the best solution was to give the individual services the opportunity to decide which type of training would work for them.

Q: Do you believe women should be allowed to serve in combat?

A: As chairman, I legislated that women should not be placed in direct combat roles.

Q: On another issue of military readiness, should the Navy resume live-fire training at Vieques Island?

Lt. Col. Strom Thurmond drives a vehicle he captured from the Germans near St. Mere Eglise, Normandy on June 10, 1944, following the Allied invasion of Europe.



German University Libraries

A: The Navy's live-fire training at Vieques Island is essential to further prepare it for combat.

Q: Do you believe America should have a national missile defense system?

A: The United States should establish a national missile defense system. I have been a strong advocate since President Reagan proposed the concept.

Q: What is your view on the constitutional amendment to protect the American Flag?

A: I strongly support a constitutional amendment to protect the flag. During moments of despair and crisis in our history, Americans have turned to the flag as a symbol of national unity. It represents our values, ideals and proud heritage.

Article design: Holly K. Soria

■ **May-June 1944:** Attached to the First Army, volunteered to jump into Normandy with the 82nd Airborne Division at the age of 42. Accompanied the division's glider elements on D-Day. Wounded during the landing, he received the Bronze Star with "V" for rallying the scattered and disorganized glider troops. Served in all First Army battles and received five campaign stars.

■ **1947-51:** Served as governor of South Carolina.
■ **1947-60:** Married to Jean Crouch (deceased).

■ **1959:** Promoted to major general, U.S. Army Reserve.
■ **1959:** Became member of Senate Armed Services Committee.

■ **1955-99:** Chairman, Senate Armed Services Committee.

■ **1946:** Returned to South Carolina.
■ **1948:** Ran as States' Rights candidate for president; carried four states, receiving 39 electoral votes.

■ **1954:** First person elected to the U.S. Senate as a write-in candidate.

■ **1968:** Married Nancy Moore.

■ **1981-87:** Chairman, Senate Judiciary Committee.

2000
■ **1995-present:** President Pro Tempore, U.S. Senate.

THE EXPULSION OF GOD

Liberal secularists in the media and academia are thwarting the Constitution and the people's will.

By Robert D. Novak

THE CONTROVERSY OVER prayer in America's public schools immediately raises two startling contradictions.

Contradiction No. 1: The two students at Columbine High School, who last year murdered 13 schoolmates, greeted each other daily with a Nazi salute without reproach from teachers or administrators. Yet, had any students at Columbine sought to pray to God, they would have been stopped and perhaps disciplined.

Contradiction No. 2: Each day before the Senate and the House of Representatives go into session in Washington, a member of the clergy – most often the full-time chaplain of each chamber – delivers an opening prayer while the lawmakers bow their heads. The same is true of state legislatures and most local governing bodies. Yet no public school class graduation or even football game in America can be started with even a non-denominational prayer.

The source of such contradictory situations is not, as commonly claimed, the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States. Rather, it is the federal

judiciary, headed by the Supreme Court, that has interpreted – or rather misinterpreted – the First Amendment to effectively bar an old tradition of prayer in schools. These rulings have been expanded and extended by overzealous, perhaps anti-religious local school officials. But the educational bureaucracy is following the federal judges.

Judges Litigating From the Bench. Most Americans and their elected representatives at all levels disagree with the judges. But they are powerless because of an anomaly that has developed in the U.S. government's system of checks and balances.

The judiciary, culminating perhaps in a 5 to 4 decision by the U.S. Supreme Court, can make a ruling based on the Constitution – essentially behind closed doors – that is binding on every citizen in the nation. It may badly misread the Constitution, but how can the highest court in the country be overruled?

This process is maddening for the majority of Americans who see the exclusion of God from the classroom as contributory to the blackboard jungle that was at the heart of what happened at Columbine High and in other school shooting tragedies.

For some 200 years, American girls and boys prayed in their public schools. Typical of this country's system, it differed from place to place. Prayers in the

classrooms were most common in the South and Southwest, and in rural areas. But it was largely a local option, with the decision to pray in many schools left to individual teachers. Never over the course of two centuries had anybody claimed that the practice was unconstitutional.

"... the majority of Americans ... see the exclusion of God from the classroom as contributory to the blackboard jungle that was at the heart of what happened at Columbine High and in other school shooting tragedies."

To be sure, conflicts over religion in the classroom were waged in the early days of the republic. During the first 40 years of the 19th century, the elected governments of Massachusetts mandated religious instruction – Protestant religious instruction – in the public schoolrooms. Catholic immigrants, largely from Ireland, protested through their new political representatives. It was political combat, waged through Democrat vs. Whig elections, not using the courts. Nobody dreamed of fighting the Protestant religious instruction by citing the First Amendment.

I will not
I will not
I will not
I will not

prayer in school. I will not pray in school.
 pray in school. I will
 pray in school. I will

Not until the second half of the 20th century did advocates of secularism in America launch a legal battle claiming that the First Amendment's "wall separating church and state" eliminated God from classrooms. In truth, search the Constitution and you can find nothing about such separation of church and state.

The Myth of Separation. The sole basis for the claim of the secularists is the 16 words beginning the First Amendment: "Congress shall make no law respecting the establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof." That's all, no explanation and no details. The First Amendment goes on to guarantee freedom of speech, of the press, of the right to assembly and the right to petition the government for a redress of grievances.

Lawyers have spent millions of words talking about the "Establishment Clause" of the Constitution, but what those 16 words meant was pretty clear when they were ratified in 1791. The founders were less than 150 years removed from the Thirty Years War when all of Europe was embroiled in conflict based on the established religions of rulers. Many of the founders represented religious denominations and sects that had left England to escape discrimination by a government where all preferences went to the members of the established Anglican Church. Indeed, they had experienced the same bitter discrimination in the colonies.

So, in the early days of the republic when it was determined that the new Constitution must be quickly amended with a "Bill of Rights" to protect individual citizens, the very first words of

the Bill of Rights intended to make sure there would be no "Church of America." The Establishment Clause intended nothing more.

Certainly, it did not intend a separation of the new state from religion. The earliest congressional actions actually encouraged religion in public schools. The Northwest Ordinance, which opened the way to statehood in the Ohio Valley and Great Lakes territories in 1787, said: "Religion, morality and knowledge being necessary for good government and the happiness of mankind, schools and the means of learning shall forever be encouraged."

As late as 1952, the Supreme Court in

a school decision asserted: "We are a religious people whose institutions presuppose a Supreme Being."

But in the half-century since then, the federal judiciary has specialized in discovering invisible writing in the Constitution that implicitly overturns legislation as diverse as the prohibition of abortion and the imposition of congressional term limits. Beginning with a vengeance in the 1980s and continuing through the present day, the courts have declared to be unconstitutional all of the following activities: teacher- or student-led classroom prayer; teacher- or student-led Bible reading and/or prayer over a public address system or in the classroom; student-initiated religious speech in schools; reading of devotionals by students over a public address system; student non-denominational prayer in classrooms; a classroom moment of silence; a classroom moment of quiet reflection; student-initiated graduation prayers; student-led or initiated prayers at assemblies or sporting events; coaches participating in prayer with students; and band teachers leading the band in prayer.

Supreme Court Wrangling. The classic Supreme Court case is *Lee vs. Weisman*, decided 5 to 4 in 1992, which ended an experience common to two centuries of Americans. Five justices said the Establishment Clause prohibits school principals from inviting members of the clergy to offer prayers at public school graduations because that practice coerces students.

Dissenting, Justice Antonin Scalia wrote that the court's majority "lays waste a tradition that is as old as public school graduation ceremonies themselves, and that is a component of an even more long-standing American tradition of nonsectarian prayer to God at public celebrations generally."

Just how far judges go was shown Oct. 29, 1997, in a decision by Federal Judge Ira DeMent in the Middle District of Alabama. The decision banned prayers, invocations, benedictions and devotional messages at graduation ceremonies. It banned the speech of all clergy, school em-



Brainerd, Minn., high school students gather in prayer for the "See You at the Pole" national day of student prayer Sept. 15, 1999.



I will not pray in school
I will not pray in school
I will not pray in school

employees, students and anybody else. The decision specifically prohibited religious speech at a graduation even if it was not carried over a public address system. A spontaneous observation by a member of the audience and a student offering up his own prayer by himself also was forbidden.

Administrators Bow to Courts. Seeking to please the courts, school administrators have added to the chaos. Despite a Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals decision barring student-initiated, nonsectarian prayer at football games, students at Santa Fe High School in Texas overwhelmingly voted for a student representative to lead a "solemnizing" moment before football games. School Superintendent Richard Ownby warned that any who led prayers at the football game last September "would be disciplined as if they had cursed."

Ownby's hand was stayed by a temporary court order, but the tangle of court decisions intimidates nervous school bureaucrats. In May 1998, Secretary of Education Richard Riley tried to

set some rational guidelines in an advisory letter stating, "Schools may not discriminate against private religious expression by students."

But he was clear about what they could not do: "School administrators and teachers may not organize or encourage prayer exercises in the classroom. Teachers, coaches and other school officials who act as advisers to student groups must remain mindful that they cannot engage in or lead the religious activities."

Riley's ground rules make clear that principals and superintendents would be in for big trouble if they were to approve this seemingly inoffensive school prayer proposed last November by social conservative Gary Bauer: "Dear God, we ask your blessings upon our country, our families and our teachers. Amen." It's unconstitutional, say the courts and the Secretary of Education.

A frequent argument against Bauer's prayer is that it opens the door to all sorts of occult incantations in the classroom, including witchcraft and satanic rites. That, of course, is nonsense. The assault comes from secularists in the news media, the entertainment industry and academia who want religion de-emphasized in the culture.

Dr. Norman Geisler, dean of the Southern Evangelical Seminary in Charlotte,

N.C., sees the prohibition as an effort "to impose the irrationality of the minority on the religious majority. Forbidding prayer in schools, which a three-quarters majority of Americans favors, is the tyranny of the minority." He cites Supreme Court Justice Potter Stewart in a 1961 decision expressing the fear that purging all schools of religious beliefs and practices would lead to the "establishment of a religion of secularism."

Does it make any difference to the future of America if the Establishment Clause now connotes the establishment of secularism?

The Results of Secularism. Former Secretary of Education William J. Bennett developed cultural index revealing a pattern of decline between 1960 and 1990. Divorce and teen pregnancy each went up 200 percent. Teen suicide increased 300 percent. Violent crime ascended 500 percent. Abortion was up 1,000 percent.

Rep. Walter Jones, R-N.C., took the floor of the House last year after the Columbine tragedy to ask this question: "Can anyone today say that our children are better off than they were 30 years ago when prayer was accepted in our schools? Thirty years ago, teachers were concerned with students smoking in school, skipping class and an occasional fistfight. Today teachers are being asked to deal with teen pregnancy, drug abuse and the physical safety of their students."

Most Americans agree. But how to return prayer to the schools? There are two routes, neither of them easy. The first course is to amend the Constitution. This is a difficult process requiring a two-thirds vote by each house of Congress followed by ratification by three-quarters of the states.

Another course would be a one-member shift in the Supreme Court that reverses the misreading of the Establishment Clause. One person may well determine the direction of America. □

Spotlight on Student Prayer in Santa Fe



Marian Ward

Do students have a right to pray before a high-school football game? Marian Ward thinks so. The Santa Fe High School student sued her East Texas school district after it threatened

to punish any student who violated an appeals court ruling banning pregame prayer.

After obtaining a temporary restraining order preventing officials from disciplining her, the 17-year-old faced faculty, students and family

members before her school's opening game last September. "Since a very good judge that was using a lot of wisdom this afternoon ruled that I have freedom of speech tonight, I'm going to take it.

"God, thank you for this evening. Thank you for all the prayers that were lifted up this week for me. I pray that you'll bless each and every person here tonight." Then she concluded, "In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen." The crowd roared with approval.

Now the U.S. Supreme Court is considering Santa Fe Independent School District vs. Doe, a case that legal experts say may finally settle the issue.



Copyright: Robert D. Novak

Robert D. Novak is a nationally syndicated columnist and co-host of CNN's "Crossfire" and "Evans, Novak, Hunt and Shields" news programs. His column appears three times weekly in more than 150 newspapers nationwide.

Article design: Doug Rollison



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privacy IS DEAD?



Illustration: Robert R. Taylor

In subtle and insidious ways, Americans have lost an astonishing degree of privacy. What little that's left is rapidly being stripped away.

By Jay Stuller

WHILE KEN PRATER normally ignored junk mail, the letter from a major drug company caught him off guard. The company said it knew Prater was taking a certain medication made by a competing firm and suggested he speak with his physician about switching to its brand. Until that moment, Prater thought only his doctor, druggist and wife knew of his heart condition.

What Prater didn't know was that during what he thought was anonymous Internet research on his illness, marketers

tagged his computer with a "cookie." A kind of identifying marker that's planted on a hard drive, the cookie enabled these businesses to follow his surf trail and record what he looked at on the Internet. Then, when Prater made an entirely unrelated purchase from a Web site, his

name and address also went into a data bank—and the drug company had itself a prospective customer.

As the 48-year-old utility lineman with two college-age kids worried about what his employer or life insurance company might do with this information, he wondered how anything could be kept secret. In an era of free-flowing digital information, so do many others.

Frank Sherman knew his 10-year-old son didn't qualify for credit, even though the child received a "pre-approved" offer in the mail. More angry than amused, Sherman traced the solicitation back to a national organization that governed his son's swimming program. The group had sold its membership roster to numerous marketers.

Although the names in these cases have been changed, such invasions of privacy are not only real, but also increasingly common in the United States. Annoying, threatening and even costly, the intrusions are an outgrowth of technology, along with the needs of government, business and bad guys alike. It is also a highly despised development.

"Information that used to be scattered around in dusty files, and which took a really good and tenacious detective to gather, can now be pulled together in seconds."

— Charles J. Sykes

author of *"The End of Privacy – Personal Rights in the Surveillance Society"*

According to a recent Wall Street Journal/NBC poll, the top concern of Americans going into the 21st century is the erosion of personal privacy.

"Until recently, people really had no idea of all the different folks who were tracking them, or how and why," says Charles J. Sykes, a research fellow at Stanford University's Hoover Institution and author of the recent book, *"The End of Privacy – Personal Rights in the Surveillance Society."* "In fact, few Americans realized how much of their lives is transparent and how vulnerable they are to the new technologies. But we are being watched more closely than ever."

How close? Well, consider that surveillance cameras not only provide 24-

hour-a-day security for convenience stores, ATMs and banks, but also record the license plate numbers of cars that use parking lots, pass through toll booths and run stoplights. The so-called "club cards" enable grocers to keep detailed records on individual buying habits.

And even though a growing number of Internet sites are adopting stronger privacy policies, many sell the information gathered by the use of cookies, if not data from their direct sales.

"It's getting more difficult to avoid this kind of data collection," explains Jodi Beebe, the hotline director of the San Diego-based Privacy Rights Clearinghouse, a non-profit consumer information and advocacy group. "Just about any time you buy something and pay with anything other than cash, you're also giving up information."

Information is valuable. And like mail-order catalog and charity fund-raising lists, the names, addresses and spending tendencies gleaned from computers are often sold over and over by private businesses.

What's more, public records are now computerized. That means court cases, bankruptcies, property transactions, department of motor vehicle information and voter registration data are available to anyone. So are divorce papers, ancient criminal records and just about any other kind of background that somehow falls into

government file folders. In fact, the world's biggest, most aggressive and comprehensive collector of data is Uncle Sam.

"The government has an incredible appetite for detailed information about citizens," explains Sykes. "The Clinton administration has created national databases to track deadbeat dads, new workers and air travelers. Our Social Security number is a de facto national identification number, in that it can be merged and matched with a mountain of information."

Put it all together, spin out a person's name and one can draw a host of conclusions about an individual's income, strengths, weaknesses and character. Moreover, just consider what could happen if genetic test results are ever plugged into this system. Used to predict what kind of disease one is likely to develop, the tests could be a good thing, in that a person can take steps to prevent an illness. But say a report that suggests you are prone to colon cancer ends up in a database. This could be a disastrous red flag to potential employers, insurers and home mortgage lenders.

When combined with Social Security numbers, Department of Motor Vehicle records and the like, the most random bits of information can be easily combined into veritable dossiers. "Information that used to be scattered around in dusty files, and which took a really good and tenacious detective to gather, can now be pulled together in seconds," adds Sykes. "Modern data webs can create a seamless web of surveillance from cradle to grave. And it's accessible to advertisers, government agencies, political enemies and angry ex-spouses."

A Sacred Precinct. Oddly enough, privacy is a relatively recent concept. Until the rise of large cities allowed people to feel some sense of "urban anonymity," most folks led their entire lives without ever being alone for any length of time. Parents, children, cousins and other members of the tribe were always hanging around the cave. In small communities, the local snoop kept close watch upon the neighbors, and in a dual role as the town gossip widely shared knowledge of any unusual sights or sounds that came from your property. Anyone seeking privacy was obviously off to conduct a disreputable deed.

Single-family homes and cars freed individuals from the visual tyranny of neighbors. In many urban areas today,

folks barely know the people who live down the street. Television, video rentals and computers also make it possible to indulge in private entertainment, far from a crowded theater. In some dimensions, we've never before been able to lead such private lives.

But perhaps the oddest thing about privacy is that about the time we

started appreciating the art of keeping personal business personal, technology developed that could take it away. Telephones were tapped within minutes, or so it seemed, of Bell yelling to Watson for help. Today, cell phone conversations might as well be held in a crowded room, since the transmissions are essentially broadcast.

Photography captured images that could be terribly unflattering. Even before television became common, Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis said newspapers "invaded the sacred precincts of private and domestic life." And while your neighbors might not know you, a tragedy that attracts the modern mass media can turn the most ordinary individual into a public figure in an instant. These kinds of intrusion raise the hackles of most Americans, a nation of people who feel as strongly about privacy as religion. The word privacy doesn't appear in the Constitution, nor is it expressly granted in the Bill of Rights. But the idea is fundamental to the nation's core.

In fact, one of the seminal issues of the American Revolution was a response to the colonial government's claim of a sweeping right to search houses to enforce tax laws and hunt for anti-British literature. During the past two centuries, Supreme Court decisions have consistently upheld a citizen's "right" to privacy. It's what Justice Brandeis famously called "the right to be left alone."

That right is particularly important when it concerns the relationship between people and their government. As Sykes writes in his book, "A state that invades the privacy of its citizens shrinks them. In a totalitarian society, everything is public, open for examination." And in such a society, government can magnify the most trivial transgression into a heinous offense and then enact ruinous punishment.

The Best of Intent. While conspiracy theorists love to believe the U.S. government is morphing into the Big Brother described in George Orwell's "1984," the fact is that most data collection efforts are done with a beneficial intent. Most of the government's information gathering helps ensure that taxes are equitably collected and money and services are properly distributed to deserving citizens. And what taxpayer wouldn't want government to track down and crack

Privacy, please

The Privacy Rights Clearinghouse has a number of excellent reports on privacy issues. It also publishes a "Privacy Survival Guide." Following are some of its highlights.

■ Find out what's in your credit report at least once a year, from companies such as Equifax, Trans Union and Experian/TRW. Available to anyone with "a legitimate business need," your own report is also available to you for less than \$10.

■ See if your medical history is stored in the insurance industry's database, and get a copy. Call the Medical Information Bureau in Boston at (617) 426-3660 or check out its web site at www.mib.com.

■ Avoid entering sweepstakes and other contests.

■ If you are an Internet user, do not send sensitive personal information on it such as phone numbers. Unless the information is "encrypted," assume it is not private.

For more information on privacy issues, contact:
Privacy Rights Clearinghouse
1717 Kettner Ave. Suite 105
San Diego, CA 92101
(619) 298-3396
prc@privacyrights.org

down on deadbeat dads?

Business also wants to be efficient. While we may not all directly benefit, the efficient marketing of goods and services through the use of technology is good for the economy, which is indirectly good for the entire nation. As for Prater and his heart condition, the new and different drug might even be a lifesaver that he wouldn't have heard about any other way.

The problems come when the information is misused, or unintentionally spread. And while most of us believe we have nothing to hide, nobody is perfect. Or, better put, few of us could withstand the close scrutiny of a data search without at least some embarrassment. It would take only a couple hundred bucks for a savvy sleuth to find out if an individual was ever treated for a sexually transmitted disease or had ever filed for bankruptcy.

One must also wonder how certain kinds of information can be wielded. Take the grocery club cards, which Jodi Beebe finds terribly annoying. "I mean, if you don't use one you don't get a discount, so there's this powerful incentive to give up even more information."

On the surface the cards seem harmless. But if one were to fall on a wet grocery store floor, and then consider a lawsuit, that store could easily tell the court about the alcohol you purchased the day before and let the jury draw its own conclusions. The price for giving up privacy can be profound indeed.

New laws and court decisions are slowing the avalanche of loose information. Several states, including California, have laws that protect the sanctity of medical records, even though difficulties arise when insurance is used to pay for the medical services. To address some of the problems, the Clinton administration recently proposed federal regulations that would require patient consent before records can be released. Yet another proposed regulation would not allow the government to build a national database on American's private medical records.

Meanwhile, the Supreme Court recently upheld the 1994 Drivers Privacy Protection Act, which gave motorists the right to withhold permission from state governments that wanted to sell their personal information. (Yes, DMVs have sold information to marketing companies.) Groups such as the Privacy Rights

Clearing House and Electronic Privacy Information Center are raising awareness. And a firestorm of public criticism and negative publicity recently scorched an Internet firm called DoubleClick, Inc., for using "cookies" to mine behavioral data matching Internet data to names and addresses.

While the Federal Trade Commission has vowed to regulate online marketers that don't address privacy issues, it's hard to imagine that the privacy genie can get crammed back in the bottle. "Some folks tell me, 'Get over it, Charlie, privacy is obsolete,'" admits Sykes. "But I sense that public awareness is driving a change in political culture, a kind of a backlash against the loss of privacy."

The fact is, with so much of our lives in the 21st century a relatively open book, there are some pages clearly worth fighting to keep to ourselves. □

Jay Stuller is a San Francisco-based journalist and long-time contributor. He believes the Y2K bug was an overrated menace. He's less sure about the threat to our privacy.

Article design: Holly K. Soria

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Above: Americans land on the Normandy beaches during the second day of Operation Overlord, June 7, 1944.

Right: Volunteers ride aboard a Higgins boat newly-built for the D-Day Museum.



AMERICA REMEMBERS ALLIED INVASION

D-Day Museum Opening in New Orleans

By Phyllis Zauner

ON JUNE 6TH—56 years after America sent her best and brightest to the beaches of Normandy—the National D-Day Museum in New Orleans will open its doors to the world. It's the only museum in the nation dedicated to the single-most decisive event of the 20th century, the invasion of Normandy by Britain, Canada, and the United States. This is America's tribute to the men who made the invasion possible.

The grand opening will be a grand affair. The day will start with a major parade from the museum to the New Orleans Arena where some 15,000 visitors will fill it. Scheduled dignitaries include Viscount Montgomery from England and Louisiana Gov. Mike Fos-

ter. Defense Secretary William Cohen is tentatively slated to speak to the group. Past National Commander William Detweiler will meet and greet Legionnaires and their families.

Tom Brokaw will act as master of ceremonies. Steven Spielberg and Tom Hanks plan to attend. France will send a frigate. National news networks will cover the event live. The world's eyes will be on the museum as millions of viewers watch the dedication, on the very site where Tom Higgins built the amphibious, flat-bottomed landing boats that Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower claimed "won the war."

This \$25 million, 70,000-square-foot museum is the vision-come-true of Stephen Ambrose, military historian and author. The idea of a museum came to him 20 years ago while

writing Eisenhower's biography. But it was while researching his book "D-Day" that his dream began to approach reality.

Higgins Boat Was Extraordinary. Why New Orleans? Because he wanted to honor native Tom Higgins, the genius who designed the LCPV (Landing Craft Vehicles Personnel)—a sort of floating cigar box that could carry a platoon of 35 men right up to the shoreline and release them quickly. In the next four years, 20,000 of his boats left New Orleans to hit the beaches of Normandy, Iwo Jima, Guadalcanal and dozens of Pacific islands.

It is no surprise that the first thing seen upon entering the museum is a Higgins Boat. Upon first sight it seems rather small.



View of the museum from Magazine Street in New Orleans.

But on invasion day, 35 men in full gear stood in it shoulder to shoulder, scared and seasick, waiting for whatever fate lay ahead on the beach.

No original 1940s Higgins Boats have survived, but the building plans were uncovered. A hundred New Orleans volunteers, many of whom had worked on the original wartime invasion boats, got together and produced an exact replica, authentic in every detail. When it was completed, the boat underwent extensive sea trials, in the Navy tradition, and was christened by the Coast Guard.

High above the LCPV, suspended by cables, are two planes – a British Spitfire that actually flew missions on D-Day and an Avenger bomber from the Pacific campaign. An elevator to a walkway on the mezzanine puts spectators at eye level with the cockpits.

On the second floor, a feature likely to be wildly popular is the Malcolm Forbes 110-seat theater, which presents a 54-minute film, “D-Day Remembered” (nominated for an Academy Award). Using voices of the people who actually participated, it combines footage and photos from American, British and German archives to create a stunning portrait of Operation Overlord.

In an adjoining room, another dramatic scenario portrays the history of events that led to D-Day. Multimedia displays offer views inside Allied headquarters at the moment the commanders make the agonizing decision. The ships are ready. It’s raining. Will there be enough half-moon light? Should we wait? Should we go? You hear the vote around the table. Tension builds. Then Eisenhower decides. The night and morning of the 6th it is. A wonderful display item is the reproduction of Ike’s handwritten note taking full responsibility for that decision had it failed.

The German side of the war is depicted as well. A large cutaway model of an elaborately built concrete bunker, with a soldier’s view of the channel and the beach, gives an idea of the scale and complexity of their fortifications.

Voices of Experience.

These are some of the big exhibits. But far more poignant are the many taped personal recollections throughout the museum. Ambrose collected more than 3,000 stories, told to him by men whose memories of those days are vivid. Most of the taped accounts are stored in the next-door Eisenhower Center, but throughout the museum, listening booths play first-hand accounts, some harrowing, some nostalgic, some sentimental. There are personal moments, such as the heroism of medic Leo Scheer, who jumped out of his burning, sinking ship. The armful of bandages he was carrying to treat the wounded got wet, but as he struggled across the beach, dodging enemy fire, he stole a fresh pack from a dead GI and went on to do his duty.

There are four floors of artifacts, films never shown, tools of war, personal gear soldiers carried, the 70-pound parachutists’ packs, guns, tanks and jeeps. Also on display is a collection of sand samples taken from each of the beaches where GIs went ashore. In some remote islands, the GIs discovered natives who had never seen outsiders before.

Journalists and photographers were there at the landing that day. Their accounts and blown-up photos line the walls. Some show GIs as they assault the beach, others are close-ups of men’s faces as they pressed forward. Everywhere are artifacts donated by the GIs who were there or by their families. A man in France who spent years combing the Normandy beaches to pick up war items donated his collection. The Imperial War Museum in London sent some of its exhibits. A collection from La Musee de la Liberation de St.-Lo in Normandy was bought outright.

Lasting Legacy. The war didn’t end with D-Day, of course. A third-floor exhibit

Scale model of a Higgins boat, the landing craft used by the Allies on D-Day.



hints at what hell it was to battle through the hedgerows of France, facing German tanks that had no trouble at all crashing through. “It was some of the worst fighting of the war,” says Ambrose.

The last room exposes the GI hell of recapturing France, slogging through the Battle of the Bulge and crossing the Rhine. In another year or so, the second floor, now incomplete, will cover the Pacific theater with its own set of miseries and victories.

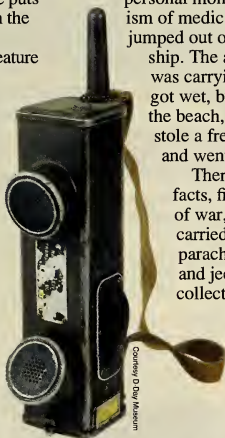
“We want people who visit this museum to have a personal reaction, not just be told what happened a long time ago.”

**Kenneth Hoffman,
D-Day Museum
Curator of Education**

Kenneth Hoffman, Curator of Education, sees the museum as being not just for vets, but for a generation of young people who can learn about the past. “The problems the world faces now are nothing compared to what the world faced in 1944. Any problems we have now can be overcome with teamwork, optimism and courage. We want people who visit this museum to have a personal reaction, not just be told what happened a long time ago. We want to show that the reason we were successful is that we had the ability to work together.”

Phyllis Zauner, a California author who writes on lifestyle and career topics, is a frequent contributor to this magazine.

Article design: Doug Rollison



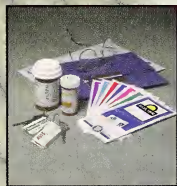
World War II walkie-talkie used by Allied forces, donated for the D-Day Museum in New Orleans.

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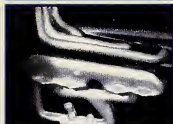
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PUTTING VETS ON A 'HIRE' PLANE



The American Legion and Hire Quality helped Dirk Scott find a job as soon as he left the military.

The American Legion has been the leader in helping veterans find jobs since 1919.

By Layne Cameron
Associate Editor

THE MILITARY UNLEASHES more than 220,000 "job ready" veterans into the civilian workforce each year. Their skills span the gamut: medics who have treated sucking chest wounds under the duress of combat; certified aircraft mechanics who keep fighter jets flying; and accomplished electricians who keep command centers up and running, whether in swamps or sweltering deserts.

Along with possessing these extensive vocational skills, young veterans also harbor worthy characteristics such as discipline, reliability, promptness, personal accountability and stability. They understand the value of teamwork, leadership and completing the mission or task at hand. In short, they are a valuable national resource.

Why, then, is this workforce treasure

continually overlooked by employers? Why are there barriers preventing the medic from becoming an EMT? The aircraft mechanic from maintaining commercial planes? The electrician from becoming a licensed tradesman?

The Leader. Since its inception, The American Legion has worked to break down these barriers. When World War I veterans were given \$60 in mustering-out pay and entered into the gloomy job market, the Legion laid the groundwork to alter their outlook from bleak to bright. The American Legion lobbied Congress and worked

for the passage of the Wagner-Peyser Act of 1933.

The result of these efforts was the first legislation that provided federal assistance for veterans in finding jobs. Employment agencies, dedicated in part to securing jobs for veterans, were established nationwide. Further Legion-sponsored acts have expanded the services offered to include career counseling and retraining.

Veterans earned even greater assistance with the passage of the Veterans Preference Act of 1944. The Legion had long advocated that veterans receive preferred status for federal jobs. Persistent bird-dogging pushed the legislation through with just a single dissenting vote. Legionnaires also helped draft the provisions used to establish the preference criteria point system.

From Past to Present. Crossing the threshold into a civilian career should be simpler. "Leaving active-duty military service is a landmark event in one's life," says James Hubbard, Director of the Legion's National Economics Commission. "Removal of 'paper barriers' will help make a fully qualified, recently separated veteran job-ready."

In 1994, 21 percent of officers were engaged in health-related specialties; another 20 percent of enlisted personnel were employed in equipment repair and maintenance specialties. All of these service members were trained at some of the finest technical and professional schools in the world. Employers should be knocking at their doors. Right?

Although these soldiers received training equivalent to or, in many cases, surpassing that of civilians, they did not earn the appropriate licenses or certificates. Thus there was no horde of com-

Help Wanted

For more information on veterans employment resources, contact:

- The American Legion, c/o the Economic Commission, 1608 K Street NW, Washington, DC 20006; (202) 861-2700; www.legion.org.
- Office of Personnel Management federal job listings: (912) 757-3000 or (912) 757-3100.
- Hire Quality: (800) 414-4733; www.hirequality.com.
- The Military and Veterans Credentialing Network - www.dol.gov/dol/vets.

The Legion Helped Me Find a Job

Dirk Scott, Environmental Product Specialist. Dirk served as the Navy's senior fleet diesel inspector in the Western Pacific. After his discharge, he contacted Hire Quality to find a career. Not only did Hire Quality find him a job in a similar field, the agency did it in a timely fashion. "It happened so fast. Before I knew it I was going to the second and third interview," says Scott, who now works at Muncie Reclamation and Supply, Muncie, Ind. "My job really parallels what I did in the Navy. It really worked out great."

John Raughter, Magazine Editor. John served in the Marine Corps and was working for the National Tribune's *Stars and Stripes* when he first learned of Hire Quality. "I left the newspaper business to work for a political thinktank. Before long, I was ready to leave Washington, D.C., and find another job," says Raughter. "It took about two weeks from when I sent my resume to Hire Quality to when I had my interview with *The American Legion Magazine*."

The job has been a good match for the veteran who also holds a master's degree from Missouri's school of journalism. Raughter wonders why every departing service member doesn't take advantage of the employment agency. "The service is free, and they do an excellent job matching a candidate's skills to the right company," he concludes.

Stephen Davis, Service Technician. Stephen served nine years in the Army and is still serving in the Reserves. On active duty, his primary job responsibilities included military police and recruiting. As a Reservist, however, he worked as a heating and refrigeration specialist.

"While working as a recruiter, I heard about Hire Quality," says Davis. "I told them I was about to get out myself, and they took down my information." Once he earned his heating and refrigeration certification, Hire Quality called and arranged an interview with Hobart Corp. in Indianapolis. Davis now services commercial kitchen equipment.

panies ready to hire these skilled workers. In 1996, The American Legion, with the cooperation of VA's Department of Veterans Employment and Training, undertook a study to help solve the dilemma.

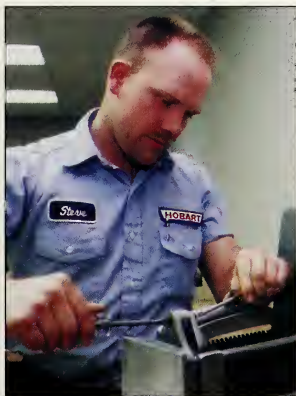
The study was limited to enlisted health-care specialties and aircraft maintenance and repair (These fields were chosen because each is regulated by a federal agency). From this study, the Legion made five recommendations to aid veterans transitioning into civilian careers:

1. Military training commands should provide information on licensing and certification during training.
2. Military and civilian agencies involved in transitions should ensure that information is available.
3. The military should offer maximum accommodation to those seeking certification.
4. Certification bodies should be informed of the standard types of military training and experience that are available to support veterans' requests for credit requirements.
5. The military should stay abreast of adaptations to credentialing standards, which change frequently.

A direct result of such ardent lobbying has been the creation of the Department of Labor's new Web site for the Veterans Employment and Training Service. The goal of the Military and Veterans Creden-

tialing Network — www.dol.gov/dol/vets — is to make it easier for veterans to obtain civilian job credentials.

"The American Legion fought hard to improve the transition of military nurses, mechanics, technicians and others into quality civilian career paths," said National Commander Al Lance. "Members of the armed forces are highly capable; they already meet many of the civilian certification require-



Stephen Davis worked as a heating and refrigeration technician while in the Reserves. Those skills translated to civilian employment soon after leaving the Army.

ments by their military training and experience."

Hire Quality. Along with removing paper barriers, the Legion works to place veterans into civilian careers. One such service's name speaks for itself — Hire Quality.

This veteran-owned employment agency specializes in placing honorably discharged veterans. The success of the program has earned the sponsorship by The American Legion.

On Feb. 1, 1998, The American Legion and Hire Quality entered into a strategic partnership and initiated a pilot program in five states. Their goal was to provide employment services to transitioning service members and their families and to promote awareness of Legion activities among the veterans with whom Hire Quality communicates.

The program has since been expanded nationwide. To date, Hire Quality has sent more than 17,700 candidates to job interviews. Of those, more than 800 have been employed. One corporation, Suburban Propane, hired 120 veterans in 1998 alone.

"A promise was made to young recruits," says Brian Feucht, Hire Quality's Vice President of Candidate Acquisitions. "If you help your country, your country will help you." Fulfilling this promise has been Hire Quality's mission since its inception.

The service is free to every honorably discharged veteran. Everyone taking advantage of this service will stay listed in Hire Quality's files until hired, unless individuals withdraw their names.

Bell Atlantic, Suburban Propane, MBNA America and Hobart USA are some of the major corporations that have realized the value of hiring veterans. Also benefiting from the service are the veterans themselves. Recently discharged service members are now employed in such positions as product specialists, service technicians and many others.

Many veterans' futures are brighter, thanks to the efforts of The American Legion. The world's largest veterans' organization may be an octogenarian, but it is hardly ready for retirement. In fact, the opposite rings true — 81 years young, full of vigor and eager to seek better ways to serve America's veterans. □

Article design: Doug Rollison

American Legion 'Yanks' and 'Rebels' join a cast of thousands at The Battle of Cedar Creek

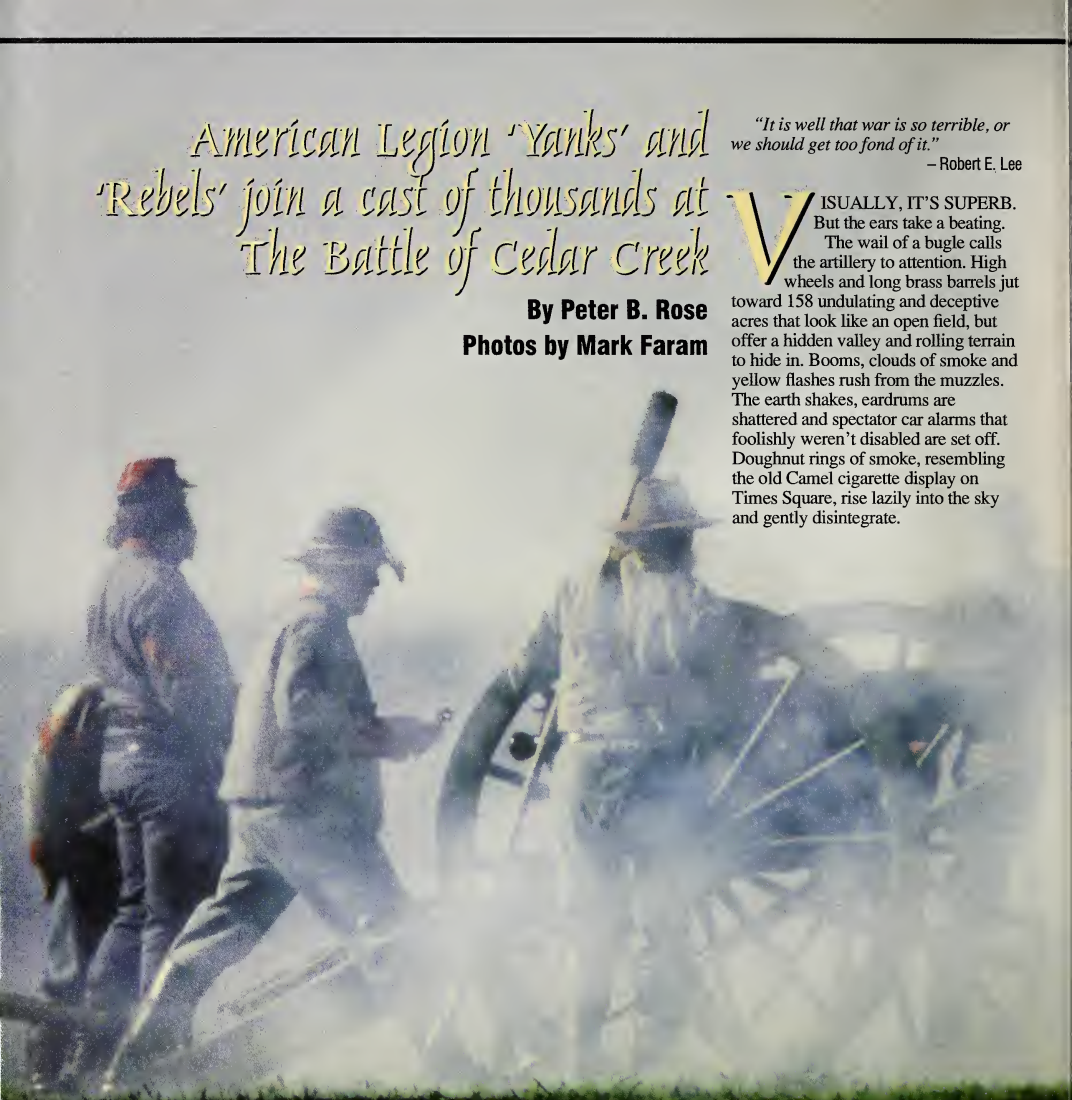
By Peter B. Rose
Photos by Mark Faram

"It is well that war is so terrible, or we should get too fond of it."

— Robert E. Lee

VISUALLY, IT'S SUPERB. But the ears take a beating.

The wail of a bugle calls the artillery to attention. High wheels and long brass barrels jut toward 158 undulating and deceptive acres that look like an open field, but offer a hidden valley and rolling terrain to hide in. Booms, clouds of smoke and yellow flashes rush from the muzzles. The earth shakes, eardrums are shattered and spectator car alarms that foolishly weren't disabled are set off. Doughnut rings of smoke, resembling the old Camel cigarette display on Times Square, rise lazily into the sky and gently disintegrate.



Revisiting the

Pop, pop pop pop, kneeled riflemen return fire with sound as rapid and intense as a gigantic popcorn popper set on an immense green stove.

The buttermut gray of Confederate Gen. Jubal A. Early's force faces off with the ink and powder blue of Maj. Gen. Philip H. Sheridan's Union army at the Battle of Cedar Creek Oct. 18, 1999. The troops clashed just as they did 135 years earlier when roundballs, mini-balls, cannonballs, the Springfield 1855 percussion rifle musket, the Springfield 1863 rifle musket, and socket bayonet and scabbard were a soldier's best friends. The dashing Early, taking advantage of heavy ground fog, surprised the Yankees and pushed them in a baffled and disorientated state back through Middleton, Va.

Early ordered the 6th Corps, "Blow

"Once you're bitten by the Civil War bug and the genealogy bug, they're hard to get rid of."

— Pat Kelly

them off that hill!"

It never happened. And hasn't since, through numerous re-enactments.

The charismatic Sheridan, galloping his horse Rienzi, inspired the counterattack of his numerically superior, rudely awakened troops. With revenge coursing through their veins, they chased the Confederates past Strasburg, Va., where a bridge just south of town had



Above: Sabers drawn, opposing cavalry soldiers meet in the heat of the battleground. Background: Civil War re-enactors replay the Battle of Cedar Creek.

Blue and Gray

collapsed. Most of Early's guns and wagons, as well as those captured from the Federals in the morning's bold assault, were stranded.

Among the 5,800 reenactors are two American Legion "Yanks" – an infantryman from New York and first sergeant from Virginia – and two American Legion "Rebels" – a Confederate general from Pennsylvania and ordnance and provost marshal from Virginia.

Along with families, friends and about 6,000 spectators who attend the four-day event, they enjoy the march through Middleton, their Union and Confederate camps, the Signal Corps Demonstrations, the Cavalry Skirmish, the Artillery Duel and three staged battles.

A dozen, maybe a score of blue-clad units occupy an incline reaching up to a wall of white, A-shaped tents. The drum and fife play "Yankee Doodle Dandy."

"Atten-SHUN company! PA-raa-ah rest!" barks Pat Kelly of Charlottesville, Va., the acting first sergeant of "Co. B 3 U.S."

He's a Navy Reserve captain who fought in Vietnam from 1965 to 1969. He belongs to Post 74 and is the 13th District Senior Vice Commander. Husky, crisp and self-assured, Kelly evinces the manner of "bulldog chic."

He wears a dark blue woollack coat over a cotton shirt that can be suffocating, light blue trousers, a 40-round cartridge box, NCO waist belt, breast plate, bayonet and canteen, and black Jeffersonian boots. And with his haversack off to the side filled with items such as a Bible, silverware and sewing kit, he inspects his bayonet-wielding troops.

"SIR, the CO-pany (sic) is FORM-ed!"

Kelly's interest in reenactments was piqued 10 years ago when he discovered that his ancestors, who were from the Confederate state of Tennessee, fought for the Union.

He notes, "Once you're bitten by the Civil War bug and the genealogy bug hits you, they're hard to get rid of."

Beyond a hill to the south, Confederate Gen. Greg Bair and his top brass con-



Legionsaire Thomas "Billy Yank" Lozo, re-enactor with the 125th New York State Volunteers, pauses to clean his rifle before heading into battle.



Women and children re-enacting the Southern gentry stroll along to witness the dangerous excitement.

vene in the brigade headquarters tent. Bair belongs to the American Legion in New Holland, Pa. He spent 27 years in the Navy. What he enjoys most about reenactments is the tactical maneuvering in the field.

"Like any real battle, when the first shot is fired, everything goes awry," he relates. "You've got to think well on your feet."

Bair concentrates on "turning a flank" or "breaking a center" while keeping his forces "real fluid."

Bair motions his provost marshal, Ed Tardue, to join the meeting. Tardue was an Air Force rescue pilot who flew C-130s in Vietnam. He's a member of American Legion Post 7474 in Bluefield, Va. Ever since he was a student at

Below: The Confederate Army advances on the battlefield.



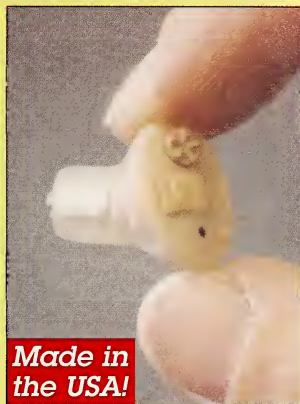
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Keeping cadence with the drummer, the Union Army marches into harm's way.

Syracuse University and "fought" the 1963 100th anniversary Gettysburg battle, he has participated in re-enactments. Tardue suffered a stroke a year ago, but the camaraderie he experienced upon his return to the Civil War fills him with thanks for being alive.

"My fellow soldiers converged around my truck, helped me set up my tent and do other things," he says with gratitude.

Among the crackle of firearms and blasting cannons, smoke shrouds the dark soldier silhouettes on the broad, green slopes. Pvt. Thomas Lozo is among the block of maneuvering 125th New York State Volunteers. He belongs

Below: Union soldiers on horseback survey the battlefield from their hilltop vantage point.



A Confederate officer gestures toward the phalanx of riflemen in preparation for the coming melee.

to American Legion Post 693 in Whitehall, N.Y. A Civil War historian, Lozo is well aware of the suffering of the Blue and Gray.

"Their clothes and shoes shrunk on their bodies. They'd go from getting really scared to getting really mad. Some couldn't take the rain and mud anymore. They stood up and got shot on purpose."

Sometimes Lozo suffers, too, during re-enactments. "There's a lot of confusion. Often you can't hear the commander. It's easy to get lost. At night all you see is the flash of guns. Even during daylight it's hard to see what's going on."

In addition to hundreds of women wearing mid-19th century fashion who accompany the soldiers at the site, uniformed women take part in the battles.

"They were called vanderviers," Pat Kelly explains. "They provided casks of wine and

whiskey to the soldiers, each of whom had a ration. In those days, if you got shot through the stomach, they thought whiskey was good for you."

Yesterday's vanderviers are today's "Ice Angels," Kelly points out. "They carry EMT kits in their leather pouches, and provide water and ice during the battles."

Cavalry dashes lead to the swirl of horseflesh, raised swords and swishing tails. Muzzles blaze, fireballs scorch the grass and 55 cannons rip the air. After the battle, the gentle sound of taps played by a Confederate bugler drifts over the silent land, echoed by his Union counterpart.

It is a chilling moment that gratifies the American Legion soldiers, as it does all the combatants. They have come out refreshed and alive.

If only war were really like this. ☐

Peter B. Rose is a freelance writer and former assistant editor of The American Legion Magazine.

Article design: Holly K. Soria



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Illegal alien members

The AFL-CIO calls it humanitarian and compassionate. But retired border patrol agent Bill King says the labor federation's call for Congress to pass a total amnesty for illegal aliens in the United States amounts to greed. "They're trying to rebuild their membership rolls," says King. "And the easiest mark out there would be the illegal alien because there are 5 or 6 million of them."

King, who also served as Western Regional Director for the Immigration and Naturalization Service, handled the amnesty program of 1986. "They told us to plan for 2 million applicants. The truth is we received 3 million applications – a third more. If they're saying six million now, I would say there are far more who would come out of the woodwork for another amnesty program."

Amnesties, he says, only encourage more illegal immigration, which is already costing California alone \$2 billion a year.

Dial 911 for the coroner

While several police brutality cases have gotten a lot of ink, attorney Richard Stevens says the real scandal is that the average citizen has no legal right to police protection from crime. In his controversial new book, "Dial 911 ... and Die," Stevens cites cases from across the country where people dialed 911 and waited in vain for the police to save them.

When they sued for damages, their cases were dismissed.

Linking his research to the current debate over gun control, Stevens says citizens are being left defenseless in their own homes. "The government takes away your means of self defense, then hands you a telephone number to call if you have an emergency," he says. "But if you call the police and they fail to respond or to protect you from criminal attack, you cannot hold the government legally responsible."

Endorsing the book, former Arizona Sheriff Richard Mack says, "Police do very little to prevent violent crime. We investigate after the fact."



Environmentalists protest the use of "genetically modified" foods at a 1999 rally near the U.S. Capitol.

Congress takes a close look at biofoods agreement

Congress is taking a close look at a new international agreement on "biosafety" that urges caution in the consumption of "transgenic" or "genetically modified" foods. But some U.S. companies have acted on their own, with Frito-Lay already announcing it has rejected bioengineered corn for its snack products.

Michael Fumento, a senior fellow at the Hudson Institute, counters, "There's no scientific basis for this. It is strictly public relations." He says there's no evidence of health problems associated with such food products, which have been on the market for five

years. "Every single American has been eating biotech foods for years," he says.

It's also hypocritical. "Frito Lay does not reject biotech oil. So a lot of the Fritos you'll be eating will consist of biotech-free corn cooked in biotech oil," he says.

While some consumers in Europe and America fret about biotech food, Fumento says it is a lifesaver for people living in the third world. Genetically modified "golden rice" and other products can save millions of people from malnourishment.

— C.K.

Spy in the White House?

He lived in the White House and functioned as FDR's chief of staff. But a new book says that Harry Hopkins was guilty of communist espionage. Due out this fall, Herbert Romerstein and Eric Breindel's "The Venona Secrets" cites intercepted Soviet communications to its agents during World War II to build a case against Hopkins. Romerstein, who worked for the government for 25 years, specialized in intelligence and security matters.

He says his research confirms Hopkins, "the close personal friend

of President Roosevelt – and his closest associate in many ways – was a Soviet spy."

But Hopkins wasn't the only one, according to the authors. The book will name other prominent communist agents in the executive branch who allegedly manipulated U.S. foreign policy during and after the war.

And while it was not FDR's intention to serve Soviet goals, "he was willing to let the communists into his administration and that gave the Soviets the opportunity," Romerstein maintains.

— Cliff Kincaid

New lure out-fishes live bait 3 to 1; could be banned from tournaments.

**Automatically
simulates movement of a
live worm**

Size of prizes may spur regulation against it

VERO BEACH, FL — In a recent bass competition near this Florida coast town, a champion fisherman used an



by Charlie Allen

imitation lure not yet on the market and humbled another champion who was using live bait. Both were in the same boat under the supervision of official observers. The new lure caught three times more bass than the live bait.

The size of the lure's win is great news for anyone who loves fresh-water fishing, but because bass tournaments are getting richer and richer, a new issue arises. Should such a lure be allowed in competition where prizes have reached the \$1,000,000 level? Most tournaments already prohibit live bait, and this new lure out-fished live bait three to one.

I asked one of the sponsors of the Vero Beach contest why the lure was so effective, and about its future in tournaments.

The key to \$1,000,000 — constant movement

"The Walking Worm™ (the lure's name) works because fish love worms more than any other food. Worms are scale-less and easier to digest than other live bait. To a fish they're a treat. But they must be alive, and that means movement. If a worm or any other prey stops moving for a moment, as regular plastic worms do, fish smell a rat. They know it's a fake. Even if the prey resumes moving, say, when a fisherman reels in a regular plastic worm, it's too late. Their mind's made up. "Ichthyologists—a fancy word for a fish professor—say that constant movement excites a predatory response in a fish. They strike because they're programmed, that way. Constant movement presents a temptation so overwhelming it trig-



One bass tournament recently awarded a first prize of \$600,000 for a catch much smaller than what the new lure caught in its first contest. Another tournament offers a first prize of \$1,000,000. Champion bass fishing has gotten so rewarding tighter controls on equipment may be required to isolate a fisherman's skill.

gers larger, less aggressive fish to strike, even fish that have just fed.

"The Walking Worm's genius is a multi-flex construction that traps air between tail segments. This causes the worm's tail to constantly curl, as if it were strolling across the bottom or through middle or top water. To a bass or other predatory fish, this constant curling is ice cream. They go berserk.



Inventor Scott Wilson and a young friend display their catch. Scott's new lure releases more energy than exists in still water, causing it to constantly curl like a live worm.

Some feel it could be banned from bass tournaments.

"I was recently down in Alabama where I saw three imitation lures — crank bait, a plastic worm and the Walking Worm — dropped in a huge fish tank with bass in it. They swam right by the other two then darted for the Walking Worm. Why? Well, the crank bait was moving, but it wasn't a worm. The regular plastic worm looked tasty, but it stopped moving for awhile when

it hit the bottom and that convinced the fish it was dead. To the bass, the Walking Worm was a juicy live worm, and they went for it hook, line and sinker, literally.

"Yes, I suppose the Walking Worm could cause some regulation. The money is so big now fisherman will look for any advantage. The Walking Worm caught more bass today in an hour than the winner of a \$600,000 prize caught over in Cypress Gardens. Now there's a \$1,000,000 prize coming up. If I were eligible for that tournament, I know what I would use."

The Walking Worm™ can be Texas or Carolina rigged. It's not on the market yet, but if you contact the factory direct, they will send you a box of 30 worms in either red shad/green fleck, June bug, or black/red fleck. (One color per box.) One box costs \$19.95, two cost only \$18.00 each. Shipping is only \$5.00 no matter how many boxes you order.

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SHOULD THE UNITED STATES CONTINUE AID TO RUSSIA?

Rep. Cliff Stearns, R-Fla.



NO The actions of Russia remain unpredictable today, and with this uncertainty comes potential danger.

Ignoring the financial risks and an emerging military threat, the United States continues to pour dollars into Russia. This is a serious mistake.

Financial aid to Russia is stolen, squandered or misdirected. The Russian Interior Ministry estimates that 40 percent of the Russian economy is controlled by organized crime. How does this administration respond? It continues to steer billions of dollars into the black hole of the Russian economy.

The administration was informed last year of allegations that Russian organized crime laundered \$10 billion through banks in New York. Yet the White House pushed for a new \$4.6 billion International Monetary Fund loan to Russia.

There is no sign that the Russian economy is responding to this aid. Of the \$430 billion invested privately by the world's

nations in foreign countries, only \$1 billion went to Russia. The international community has cast a vote of no confidence in the Russian economy.

This is not just an economic crisis; it is also a political crisis. As faith in its economy diminishes, a growing segment of Russia is reject-

ing democratic principles and embracing totalitarianism.

The next generation of ballistic-missile submarines is under construction in Russian ports. Each submarine will carry up to 96 nuclear warheads. Additionally, new silo-based and mobile Topol-M2 intercontinental ballistic missiles are being deployed at the rate of 10 per year. Finally, Russia has bought almost a dozen strategic bombers from Ukraine along with 500 air-launched cruise missiles.

This massive rearmament would hardly be possible without American financial aid. Not only is our assistance failing to revive the economy or to promote needed market reforms, it is resuscitating a threat to our national security.

We have a tremendous interest in seeing economic and political freedoms take root in Russia. However, our current course of action has underwritten a dismal failure. The dollars going into Russia are supporting either corruption or the development of new weapons. American taxpayers should not be funding this economic collapse or military expansion.

Rep. Ellen Tauscher, D-Calif.



YES Now that we have won the Cold War, we have to win the post Cold War. This is not a traditional military conquest. By keeping Russia's nuclear scientists home and finding jobs for them, we can reduce the nuclear threat and position these scientists as the brain trust of Russia's economy.

More than 700,000 people are employed in Russia's 10 "nuclear cities" — isolated, fenced-off communities where the former Soviet Union maintained its nuclear arsenal. Russia cannot afford to pay them a livable wage and many have gone months without a paycheck.

The objective of the Nuclear Cities Initiative and the Initiatives for Proliferation Prevention is to employ these scientists in non-defense related activities. For that, we need to initiate private development so that the Russian scientists can provide for their families without nuclear-weapons-related jobs.

These scientists should help foster economic stability. But they have never faced the challenges of entrepreneurship, and many of them are not ready for the market-based system. That is why American scientists are critical to the success of Russia's economic transition.

Additionally, weapons-related radioactive materials have not been adequately secured.

When I was in Russia, I saw labs and storage areas with insufficient locks, no access control gates and no metal or radioactive materials detectors. That is why we are working to improve Russia's security by upgrading gates and guards; modernizing security systems; and installing monitoring devices at airports and border crossings.

To ensure U.S. financial resources are used wisely, we have agreed to reimburse costs only after a project has been completed. Moreover, I support the president's joint research and aid package with Russia in exchange for the promise to stop making plutonium.

If we are going to create commercial jobs in the Russian nuclear complexes, we must engage the business community today. Fortunately, our scientists have paved the way for joint commercial endeavors.

Our investment in Russia is small, but will have an impact on our nation's security. Only through active engagement can we prevent a future brain drain to rogue states and limit the chance that nuclear material will fall into the wrong hands.

"Not only is our assistance failing to revive the economy or to promote needed market reforms, it is resuscitating a threat to our national security."

"We need to initiate private development so that the Russian scientists can provide for their families without nuclear-weapons-related jobs."

Your Opinions Count, Too.

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Then-National Commander Butch Miller presents the William Randolph Hearst Trophy to the Department of Ohio at the 1999 National Convention. From left to right: Miller, Ron Hartman, Melvin D. Chapman, Richard Zulch and Carl W. Swisher.

Department of Ohio claims Hearst award

For the third time in the past decade, the Department of Ohio has won the Legion's prestigious William Randolph Hearst Americanism Award.

One of the Department's success stories is its Americanism and Government program. Last year more than 90,000 students participated.



Ryan Rippel, right, receives the resolution recognizing his accomplishments as Boys Nation president from Missouri state Rep. Tim Harlan.

Boys Nation president addresses Statehouse

Ryan Rippel, 1999 Boys Nation president, recently addressed the Missouri State House of Representatives about his experiences at American Legion Boys State and Boys Nation.

The first nonelected official to address the legislature, he spoke about Americanism, youth problems and the Vietnam Veterans Memorial.



President Clinton and Roger Durbin unveil a plaque dedicating the site of the World War II Memorial in Washington, D.C., on Veterans Day 1995.

Father of WWII Memorial passes

Ohio Legionnaires and World War II veterans around the country are mourning the loss of Roger Durbin, 79, who passed away Feb. 6. Durbin is considered by many to be the father of the National World War II Memorial movement.

During his dozen years of dedica-

tion to the memorial, Durbin not only promoted the project across the Buckeye State, but in Washington as well when he testified before the House Veterans Affairs Committee.

The groundbreaking is scheduled to take place on the National Mall this Veterans Day.

Steelworker saves flag at protest

Legionnaire John Goodman traveled to Seattle earlier this year to protest the World Trade Organization at its scheduled conference. Ironically, the Spokane, Wash., Post 110 member became the object of the protestors' jeers.

During the march, Goodman witnessed people ripping down an American flag and overheard them conspiring to burn the flag or fly it upside down. Goodman pulled Old Glory from their hands, saying, "This flag is going back up the way it came down."

Some members of the angry mob attempted to snatch back their stolen prize, but Goodman stood tall and refused to hand over the flag. To honor Goodman's effort, the King County, Wash., Department of Adult Detention decommis-



John Goodman accepts the American flag from Maj. Craig Nelson of the King County Jail. Goodman protected the flag from being burned during the WTO protests in Seattle.

sioned the flag and framed it. They presented Goodman and the United Steelworkers Union with the flag and a plaque.

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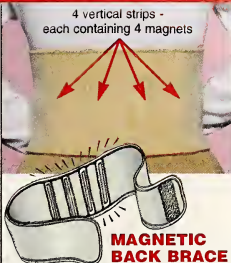


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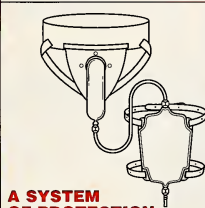
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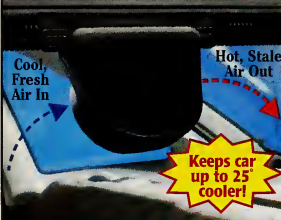
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Legion College grad applies knowledge

After graduating from the first American Legion National College held in 45 years, Nick



Michael

Michael coordinated a two-day effort that netted 21 new members at Post 56 in Oroville, Wash.

Post 56 members hit the phones and called former and potential district members from a list provided by the National Headquarters. Another team canvassed door to door. A third group manned the National World War II Memorial fund display at the nearby Wal-Mart.

Michael, a Post Vice Commander, feels revitalization efforts in his area have been better served through posting fliers, making phone calls and keeping a high profile in public. "I wear my Legion ball cap wherever I go," Michael added.

18-year-old soldier joins Legion for life

Army Pvt. Daniel Ashe felt like a Legionnaire long before he was issued a membership card. But now the 18-year-old soldier can claim to be one of the youngest Paid-Up-For-Life members in Legion history.



Ashe

New York Post 862 got the membership boost when the younger Ashe joined his father and brother who are already on its rolls.

Although joining the Legion is an Ashe family tradition, the young soldier points out that many of his fellow troops have no idea what the organization is all about. He thinks more advertising would help recruit younger members.



Lt. Scott Hudson and Petty Officer 1st Class Tim Foster, representing the USS Boise, accept complimentary one-year Legion memberships. Idaho Department Commander Richard Hanni presents the memberships as Alternate National Executive Committeeman Dee Collins looks on.

USS Boise crew joins Legion

Two sailors from the nuclear attack submarine USS *Boise* traveled to Idaho recently to accept Legion memberships for themselves and 139 of their fellow crewmembers. Navigation Officer Lt. Scott Hudson and Petty Officer 1st Class Tim Foster were treated to a five-day visit of the area before accepting complimentary membership cards during the Department's Mid-Winter Conference in Boise.

"Sailors from other submarines have already contacted me and asked how we got into this program. It is wonderful for us to be associated with one of

the veterans' groups and we consider this a unique honor," said Hudson.

It may not stay unique as National Commander Al Lance, who attended the presentation, commented that due to the success of the USS *Boise* enrollment, The American Legion will invite service members from other ships and units to become members. He also stressed the 15,000 Posts and 55 Departments across the country and overseas will be available to Legionnaires on active duty. "Helping our veteran members is what it is all about," Lance said. "And that has been the same since 1919."

2000 Legion College deadline is July

The search for candidates for the 2000 class of The American Legion College is on. The college is scheduled to be held Nov. 13-17 in Indianapolis. Each Department may nominate up to three candidates.

Candidates for the Legion College must be Panama, Grenada or Gulf War veterans with at least two years of Legion membership and demonstrated leadership potential. The deadline for nominations is July 15.

The college cost per Department is \$600 per individual. National takes care of



Legion College attendees participate in a work group at the National Headquarters last November during the first Legion College in 45 years.

the rest. Information on last year's college can be found in the February issue of *The American Legion Magazine* and on the Legion Web page.

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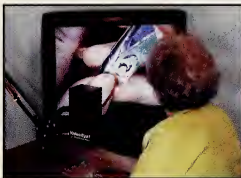
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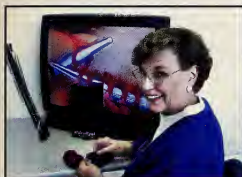
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Tour dates

MAY

- 1 Nashville, Tenn.
- 3 Springfield, Ill.
- 5 Des Moines, Iowa
- 8 Lincoln, Neb.
- 10 Pierre, S.D.
- 12 Bismarck, N.D.
- 15 Helena, Mont.
- 17 Boise, Idaho
- 19 Salem, Ore.
- 22 Olympia, Wash.
- 24 Juneau, Alaska
- 31 St. Paul, Minn.



Balint Vazsonyi gives a speech on the steps of the South Carolina state house during the Re-Elect America tour stop in Columbia, S.C., March 1.

Re-Elect America tour rolls on

The Re-Elect America tour moves through state capitals spanning the nation in May. From Nashville, Tenn., to Juneau, Alaska, Balint Vazsonyi will spread his message that Americans need to work harder to restore the principles penned by America's founding fathers.

"The principles that unite us are more important than the issues that divide us,"

Vazsonyi said during the tour's first stop in Tallahassee, Fla.

During last Fall's NEC meetings, The American Legion resolved to support Re-Elect America. The resolution encourages the Departments to work with Re-Elect America and their governors' offices to facilitate activities in their states.

Korea tour packages aimed at vets

Several companies are offering 50th Anniversary Korean War tour packages, which emphasize travel to the larger commemoration activities. These tours range in price from about \$1,500 to \$1,800 per person, double occupancy. Prices vary depending on the time of the year, length of tour and accommodations. Most packages include some meals, transportation in Korea and admission fees.

For more information about Korean War battlefield tours, call the Korean National Tourism Organization at 800-868-7567.



The Task Force Smith Memorial near Osan Air Base is one of many sights that can be seen on Korean War battlefield tours.

Battlefield tours

The following is a list of some of the companies offering tours:

California Pacific Tours
888-822-5258 or
www.cptours.com

Olympus Travel
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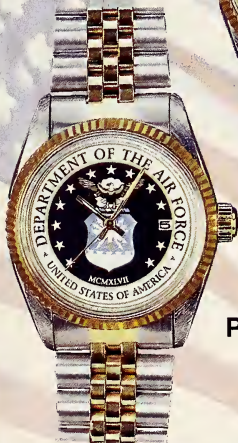
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VETS® is a private veterans program that provides The American Legion with information about reunions, helps veterans locate old buddies and offers other special benefits and services to veterans and their families.

REUNION INFORMATION

This month we have listed many groups that are planning reunions. Information is provided free to Legion members and other veterans who write VETS and enclose the 5-digit VETS number of each reunion. VETS maintains reunion and contact information for more than 12,000 outfits. Reunion information is also available at no charge on the Internet at www.vets.org. Many libraries and schools will provide Internet access free for veterans with no Internet access or computer skills. We regret that due to call volume we cannot accept phone requests for reunion information. See "How to Use VETS Services" below.

OUTFIT ENROLLMENT IS FREE

Coordinators may list reunion information with VETS at no charge. Information may be submitted electronically via the VETS website or on official forms by writing VETS®. Individuals planning new reunions or offering themselves as points of contact for possible new reunions may also register at no charge.

THE NATIONAL VETS® ARCHIVES

The National VETS Archives is a free historical registry for veterans who want to be listed on the VETS roster for each outfit in which they served. Registration is free but to ensure accuracy, must be on official archive forms. Registration may be done electronically at the VETS Internet home page. VETS uses the archives to develop historical rosters and reunion contact information. Deceased veterans may be enrolled posthumously by a family member.

FINDERS/SEEKERS®

Each year for nearly a decade, VETS has helped thousands of veterans get in touch with their outfits and buddies. Ann Landers and Dear Abby have shared our success with millions of their readers and now due to tech-

nology and demand, Finders/Seekers has moved to the Internet. A searchable list of our active files is available on the VETS home page. We encourage all veterans to check this registry to see if someone is trying to find them. Individuals who order Finder/Seekers will have their requests listed and also receive our free tips on how to locate missing veterans. Cost is a non-refundable \$15. Please do not send cash. We accept checks, money orders and MasterCard, Visa and Discover cards.

VETS® BENEFITS

Veterans who enroll in the National VETS Archives are eligible for a variety of products and services offered by VETS. Veterans who qualify automatically receive notices about their outfit reunions, free or discounted Finders/Seekers services and other VETS consumer benefits. In most cases, VETS benefits can be extended to other family members and the survivors of deceased veterans. Details are available on the VETS website or by writing VETS.

HOW TO USE VETS® SERVICES

To promote better accuracy and faster response, and except for reunion information requests, official VETS forms should be used to submit information or request other services. Forms are available free on the VETS website at www.vets.org or they may be obtained by writing VETS at P.O. Box 901, Columbia, MO 65205-0901 and enclosing a self-addressed, stamped #10 (long) reply envelope. VETS normally responds to all written requests the next business day. To keep costs low and still handle thousands of requests each week, VETS does not accept phone calls for reunion information. In an emergency, messages about other services may be left on the VETS voice mail system 24 hours a day at (573) 474-4444. You can also reach VETS via e-mail at admin@vets.org.

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ARMY

103rd Inf. 410th Rgt., 2nd Bn. #15352; 103rd Inf. Div. (The Cactus Div) #21864; 110th AAA Gun Bn. #13145; 115th Station Hospital #20661; 14th Engr. Combat Bn. #22229; 151st Combat Engrs. #23864; 157th Engr. Combat Bn. #15588; 157th Inf. Rgt., 45th Inf. Rgt., incl. 158th FA Bn. #15238; 17th Airborne Bn. #16619; 18th Engr. Bde. 347th Engr. Svc. Rgt. #40008; 1st Cav. Div., 7th Rgt., 2nd Bn., Co. E (Korea) #13558

1st Sig. Bde. (Vietnam) #19422; 20th Combat Engrs., 20th/1340th Bns/1171st Rgt. HQ #15365; 23rd Recon Co. #23812; 25th FA Bn. #16130; 25th Inf. Div. 8th FA Bn. (Korea 1950-53) #10354; 26th Inf. Rgt. #24021; 278th Engr. Combat Bn. #15945; 27th FA Bn. #13169; 280th FA Bn. #16212; 28th Gen. Hosp. #16655; 297th Engr. Combat Bn. #22830; 306th Field Hospital #15621; 30th Div., 11th Engr., Co. G #15610

315th Inf. Rgt. Assn WWII #40013; 3432nd Ordnance MAM Co. #40011; 35th Inf. Div.,

134th Rgt. WWII #15531; 375th FA Bn. #15646; 39th AAA Bn. 35th AAA Bde. HQs #24076; 451st AAA Bn. #11524; 456th AAA Bn. #21663; 4th Arm'd. Div. #16402; 42d Infantry (IVY) Div. #14550; 529th FA Obs. Bn. #15386; 533rd EB&SR #16356 5th RCT #14104; 601st Tank Bn. #16458; 62nd Signal Bn. #12150; 68th AAA Gun Bn., 508th Ops. Det. #16721; 741st Tank Bn. #19509; 772nd MP Assn. #19911

8221st AU (Korea 1950-54) #40015; 88th Inf. Div. "Blue Devils" SE Chap. #20427; 94th Inf. Div., 302nd Inf., Co. L #16446; 95th AAA Gun Bn. #23556; HQS V Corps Assn. #10115; Society of 1st Inf. Div. (Big Red One) #15354

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Anyone who left for Italy from New York City on Nov. 30, 1945, aboard the USS *Richardson* contact Robert L. Wright, P.O. Box 333, Palisade, NE 69040.

Anyone who served with the U.S. Army 270th Signal Construction Company in northern France, Belgium and Germany in 1945 contact A.J. (Wolters) Sablitz, 6707 North Greenview St., Chicago, IL 60626 or phone 773-262-4226 or email ssablitz@clausen.com.

Anyone who served with 1041 EGGU contact Richard J. Tusciani, 808 Locust Dr., Mastic Beach, NY 11951.

Anyone who was a member of the 820th Medical Air Evacuation Squadron, 317th Troop Carrier Wing, 5th USAAF from October 1943-March 1946 contact John Cantando, 1064 Admiral Pl., Elmira, NY 14901 or phone 607-733-5781.

TAPS

Francisco Santiago, Dept. of Puerto Rico. Nat'l. Foreign Council Vice Chmn. 1994-1997, Dept.

Cmdr. 1997-1998 and numerous Department positions 1994-1998.

Thomas W. Streeter, Dept. of Alaska. Nat'l. Americanism Council Memb. 1968-1971, 1973-1978, Nat'l. Counter Subversive Activities Cmte. Memb. 1971-1973, Dept. Cmdr. 1982-1983, Nat'l. Cmsn. on Child & Youth, Region 8 Memb. 1987-1998, Nat'l. Executive Cmte. Alt. 1994-2000, Nat'l. Economic Cmsn. 1998-2000 and numerous Department positions 1976-2000.

Thomas Dale Alford, Dept. of Arkansas. Nat'l. Dist. Guests Cmte. Memb. 1959-1961, Nat'l. Americanism Cmsn. Vice Chmn. 1961-1962, Nat'l. Counter Subversive Activities Cmte. Memb. 1960-1961, Nat'l. Inter-Amer. Cmte. Memb. 1961-1962, Nat'l. Americanism Cncl. Vice Chmn. 1962-1963, Nat'l. Dist. Guests Cmte. Vice Chmn. 1983-1993, Dept. Cmdr. 1992-1993, Nat'l. Foreign Relations Cncl. Vice Chmn. 1993-1999, Nat'l. Security Cmsn. Memb. 1994-2000 and numerous Department positions 1991-1999.

Jerry H. Newman, Dept. of Alaska. Nat'l. Counter Subversive Activities Cmte. Memb. 1965-1968, Nat'l. Americanism Cncl. Memb. 1968-1969, Nat'l. Veterans Preference Cmte. Memb. 1969-1971, 1974-1976, Nat'l. Foreign Relations Cncl. Memb. 1976-1978, Dept. Cmdr. 1979-1980, Nat'l. Naval Affairs Cmte. Memb. 1984-1987 and numerous Department positions 1976-1987.

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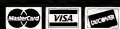


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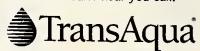
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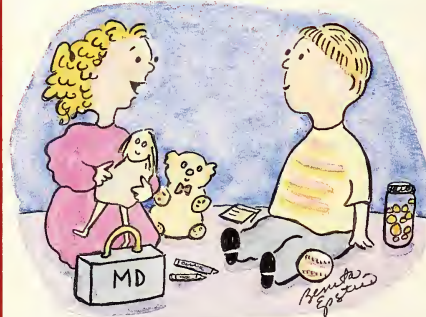
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